Practices spared, one OD’s home lost in California fires

At least one AOA member optometrist lost her residence as the result of wildfires that swept across more than 380,000 acres in Southern California last month, according to the California Optometric Association (COA). The COA believes another member lost a vacation home in the California hills.

The COA was continuing to gather information as this AOA News went to press and did not have the names of the optometrists available for release. Additional losses were possible as the fires were only about 40 percent contained at press time, according to COA Executive Director Elizabeth L. Brutvan, Ed.D.

The COA had received no reports regarding injuries sustained by association members, their families or staff members. The association had received no reports of optometrists losing their primary practices in the fire. However, numerous practices were temporarily closed as large areas of the state were evacuated, Dr. Brutvan added. Virtually all practices in the San Diego area were closed for at least some period over the week of Oct. 21 as area freeways were shut down, meaning neither patients nor practitioners could make it to the office, according to area practitioner Eric White, O.D., who helped coordinate evacuee care in the area (see related stories).

AOA supports efforts on Capitol Hill highlighting combat-related eye trauma

On Oct. 29, the AOA joined fellow leaders of the vision community in sponsoring an important and timely briefing on Capitol Hill aimed at bringing to light the devastating impact that combat-related eye injuries are having on American military personnel. The briefing, hosted by the Congressional Vision Caucus (CVC), titled “Through the Eyes of a Soldier: A Congressional Briefing on Combat-Related Eye Injuries,” highlighted the need to improve the care that American military personnel affected by combat eye trauma receive and to aid those suffering vision damage associated with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).

Statistics have shown that over half of those treated at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and diagnosed with TBI also experience vision damage, while upward of 70 percent with brain injuries at the VA Polytrauma need to improve the care that American military personnel affected by combat eye trauma receive and to aid those suffering vision damage associated with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).

HHS launching EHR demonstration

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has announced a five-year demonstration project intended to encourage small to medium-sized physician practices to adopt electronic health records (EHRs).

Under the program, Medicare will provide bonuses for health care providers in 12 selected communities who meet criteria for the use of electronic health information technology in their practices. The project is to begin taking shape early next year.

AOA supports efforts on Capitol Hill highlighting combat-related eye trauma

The Medicare Electronic Health Records Demonstration is

Building the Paperless Practice: AOA’s Electronic Health Records Seminar

January 25-26, 2008 @ The Gaylord Texan

www.aoa.org/paperless.xml
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Seven habits of highly effective optometrists

As a member of the AOA Board of Trustees for almost nine years, I have had the opportunity to travel this country and meet thousands of optometrists. As I think about that experience, I am struck by how many successful optometrists I have met and how diverse their areas of expertise are.

The successful optometrist can be found everywhere—in every conceivable practice setting, research laboratories, schools and colleges of optometry, hospitals, VA medical centers and the military.

But successful optometrists don’t confine their activities to science and clinical care alone. Successful optometrists are found in athletics, philanthropy, public health policy, law, state legislatures and even the U.S. Congress! I am aware of at least one optometrist who was a pilot for a major airline. Another OD, Larry DeLucas, O.D., Ph.D., has flown on the space shuttle.

Reflecting on the impressive optometrists I have met over the years reminded me of one address I gave many years ago at a hooding ceremony at The Ohio State University. I’d like to share it with you:

To the Graduating Class:

Let me be the first to congratulate you on your graduation from optometry school and welcome you into our great profession. As you move from the classroom to the exam room, you undoubtedly are wondering what it takes to be successful in optometry. Do you really have the “right stuff”?

In 1989, Stephen Covey published a book titled “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.” In this enormously popular and important book, Mr. Covey outlines seven fundamentals or habits he has observed in people who are successful and fulfilled throughout the dimension of their lives.

As any good professor would do, I have taken the liberty of “borrowing” from Mr. Covey’s basic idea and have expanded on it to include what I call “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Optometrists.” I have observed that if these habits are practiced, personal fulfillment and professional success usually follow.

Habit #1: Always put the patient first

Highly effective optometrists view patient care as a special privilege. The needs and concerns of the patient must always come first. Compassion isn’t something for which you can get paid, but the compassionate optometrist reaps rewards measured not by dollars, but by grateful friends and loyal patients.

Habit #2: Expect excellence of yourself—and deliver it!

Providing quality care must become a habit. Be compulsive about delivering the absolute finest and best care and expect your employees to do the same.

Remember, some day you will be a patient too.

Every effective optometrist I know understands the value of his or her professional organization and participates at some level. The benefits are enormous.

Habit #3: Be a leader; have a vision

True leaders give themselves over to a guiding vision, a clear idea of who they are or want to be and where they are heading. A vision is a dream with a plan. Successful leaders take responsibility and act. They don’t just sit on the sidelines watching others, wishing how things might be—they go out and do it. So dream your dreams, make a plan, and do it!

Habit #4: Embrace change; be proactive

We have often heard the phrase “change is inevitable,” it really is true. The evolution of our profession provides an outstanding example of that axiom.

The expansion of scope of practice, incorporating new technologies in patient care and adjusting to the new economics of managed care are all examples of inevitable change in our profession. However, though change is inevitable, it is not necessarily uncontrollable.

Successful optometrists don’t fear change, they anticipate it. In fact, really successful optometrists welcome change. For the successful optometrist knows that with change comes opportunity. So don’t just endure change—embrace it, then take advantage of it. There is no other way.
LETTERS

Editor:

On October 10, 2007, the Illinois General Assembly passed SB 641 into law, requiring an eye examination for all children entering kindergarten or enrolling for the first time in public, private or parochial elementary schools in Illinois.

Optometry has always had a strong legacy in its past leaders who have expanded our profession in providing vision care. However, the impetus for this new law in Illinois was brought about by Janet Hughes, who felt strongly that good vision was paramount to academic success.

Janet is not an optometrist, but a concerned mother. During the summer of 2002, Janet brought her daughter to Sam Forzley, O.D., who diagnosed significant hyperopia and astigmatism, which had gone undetected by the school’s vision screening. As a result of this experience, Janet began her efforts to make eye exams mandatory for school children in Illinois and across the country.

To say Janet worked hard and continues tirelessly promoting excellence in eye care is an understatement. A true champion for children in Illinois and across the United States.

Her leadership in the formation of the Vision First Foundation is again an illustration of her inner strength and inner giving in assisting optometry and providing the best in quality vision care to the citizens of Illinois and the rest of the country.

Kudos to Janet!

Leo Prentice, O.D.
Woodridge, IL

Editor:

While the celebrating continues in Illinois over the passage of our Children’s Mandatory School Eye Exam Bill, I would like to take a moment to say thanks to a very important group.

Mrs. Janet Hughes and the Vision First Foundation have worked for years to sensitize our legislature and the public to the difference between a school screening and an eye exam.

Her efforts as a mother of five made the passage of our bill significantly easier and set in place a model which can be used by other states seeking to pass similar legislation.

States are encouraged to e-mail Mrs. Hughes at VisionFirstFoundation@comcast.net, can call (630) 257-1784 or visit the Vision First Foundation at www.VisionFirstFoundation.org.

Michael G. Horstman
Executive Director
Illinois Optometric Association

Habit #5: Support organized optometry

Looking back a half a century, the O.D. degree was only a dream, the use of pharmaceuticals by optometrists was unthinkable, and not one Medicare dollar flowed into optometric practices. Today, you are privileged to receive a Doctor of Optometry degree and be called “doctor.”

You will be licensed by the state and recognized by law to diagnose and treat disease, and you will participate fully in the Medicare system. You will not know optometric practice any other way.

While there is much work yet to be done to secure optometry’s rightful place in the health care system, you have organized optometry — the AOA and its affiliated state associations — to thank for the bright future you inherit.

There can be no excuse for not giving back to organized optometry by at the very least becoming a member of your state association. Every effective optometrist I know understands the value of his or her professional organization and participates at some level. The benefits are enormous.

Habit #6: Give to your community

Muriel Siebert, a successful stockbroker and the first woman to own a seat on the New York Stock Exchange, was asked why she devotes so much of her personal time and money toward helping young women get started in business.

She said, “I was raised in a way that when good things happen to you, you owe.”

Highly effective optometrists know their success is due in part to the support they receive from the community. Already many have contributed to your early success: your family, your friends, your teachers, perhaps your church, and perhaps even the taxpayers in your state.

When you go back to your communities, you will feel the responsibility to give back. For some it will be service clubs, while for others it will be volunteering or philanthropy. Whatever avenue you prefer — do choose one.

For the more successful you are, the more you owe.

Habit #7: Invest in yourself

You have, no doubt, had enough school for a while. But let me assure you, you have just begun to learn. Despite receiving our finest education, the first week you see patients on your own you may well feel that you don’t know anything. Remain calm, don’t panic, I have every confidence that you will do just fine.

However, as time goes on you will find there are many new things to learn. In fact, it has been said that our required body of knowledge doubles every 15 years. The highly effective optometrist makes a habit of keeping abreast of new information through continuing education and journals.

Investing in yourself also means taking a vacation, spending time with your family, exercising the body and the mind, reading for pleasure, taking up a hobby, or playing a musical instrument. Make time for these things or the rest will fall apart and your effectiveness will diminish.

Why seven habits?

I have shared with you some simple observations of colleagues who have been extraordinarily effective and achieved successful, fulfilling lives. Why seven habits? Because if you think about one of these habits each day of the week, it will remind you that success and fulfillment accrue one day at a time. Patience isn’t always easy, but it is often rewarded.

Sincerely,

Kuri L. Cheep 60, AoO

Send letters to:
Editor, AOA News
243 N. Lindbergh Blvd., St. Louis MO 63141
RAFoster@aoa.org
AOA News reserves the right to edit letters submitted for publication.

Personal message

In the past weeks, we’ve been reminded how suddenly disaster can strike by the terrible fires in Southern California. Our hearts go out to those optometrists and their staffs who have lost homes, practices or had to relocate during the emergency.

Fortunately, the AOA is ready to respond through the Optometry’s Fund for Disaster Relief. Established in the wake of previous disasters, the fund makes grants available quickly and with a minimum of hassle to aid ODs in time of crisis.

By coincidence, this issue of AOA News not only has coverage of the ODs who were victims of the California fires, but also a letter and donation envelope from Optometry’s Charity – The AOA Foundation. I encourage you to consider a generous contribution to the Foundation to help us be ready for the next time of crisis.

Sincerely,

Kuri L. Cheep 60, AoO
If all you see are lenses, why not take another look?

Transitions can help you take better care of both your patients and your business.

Producing the world’s leading photochromic lenses is an important part of what we do. But that’s not all there is to Transitions Optical. We can actually help you promote and provide better vision care. The Transitions® Partners in Education™ program offers product and clinical education along with counseling to help you better examine your patients and recommend eyewear that promotes long-term eye health. The Transitions® Healthy Sight for Life Fund helps eye health-related causes around the world, while our outreach and educational programs offer tools for teaching eye health in schools. And our consumer advertising and public relations programs help bring more patients to you while raising awareness of our shared concern about sun damage. These are just a few of the ways we can help. If you’d like to see more, contact us.

1.800.848.1506 transitions.com
five massive wildfires that scorched more than 379,000 acres between San Diego and Los Angeles last month displaced more than 600,000 residents, shut down freeways, and filled the air with dense smoke that hampered firefighters and irritated eyes for miles around.

Yet few, if any, evacuees, firefighters, or area residents were without necessary eye care, thanks to a prompt and coordinated effort by area optometrists and the ophthalmic industry, according to San Diego optometrist Eric White, O.D., who helped organize the effort.

“Our (San Diego County Optometric) society has been great,” said Dr. White. “I don’t know of any optometrists who are not seeing patients (to provide emergency care related to the fires).”

He also credited Vision Service Plan (VSP), which implemented a comprehensive disaster relief plan and ophthalmic manufacturers who quickly shipped more than 2,500 cases of eye care supplies into the area.

Mass evacuations created sudden demand for eyewear and eye or vision care, Dr. White noted.

Many of those forced to evacuate their residences left without the eyeglasses or contact lenses necessary for reading or driving or without the contact lens care supplies necessary to ensure proper lens care if they are away from home for an extended period, Dr. White noted.

Under VSP’s disaster relief program, any plan member who loses or breaks eyewear, or who needs contact lens replacements or an eye examination due to the fires is eligible to receive services and new materials at no cost, according to a company statement.

Non-VSP members can request a VSP eye care voucher from the American Red Cross. The vouchers were made available in evacuation centers throughout the fire area.

In all, more than 1,100 VSP vouchers were made available to those impacted by the fires.

VSP also provided eye care supplies, such as eyeglass repair kits, contact lens solution, artificial tears, lens cleaning cloths and other cleaning materials. Eye care educational materials, focusing on eye injury and irritation prevention tips, were also made available at evacuation centers.

VSP also sent 10,000 blankets and sports bags.

Meanwhile, Alcon, Inc., Advanced Medical Optics and Bausch & Lomb shipped more than 30 pallets of contact lens care kits and contact lens solutions.

The TLC Laser Eye Centers donated reading glasses for evacuees who had left behind their eyewear.

Deteriorating air quality, resulting from smoke and soot, have caused widespread eye irritation, dryness, and even headaches for both fire evacuees and area residents who remained in their homes, according to local optometrists.

Many report they have been treating patients for those conditions.

Nowhere were these problems more severe than on the fire lines, where intense heat and airborne debris made eye problems a problem for firefighters, according to Cable News Network (CNN). In response, VSP and Bausch & Lomb promptly brought cases of artificial tears directly to the firefighters in the California hills, Dr. White said.

Optometrists in the San Diego County Optometric Society (SDCOS) and other California Optometric Association-affiliated optometric societies became involved in emergency efforts after the California State Board of Optometry issued a call for volunteers on Oct. 24.

“Volunteers are especially needed in the San Diego area,” the board noted in an e-mail to licensed optometrists.

The board’s call for volunteers came under a directive from lower Schwarzenegger (R), who was attempting to mobilize health care professionals in the area.

VSP activated a four-person disaster response team that flew into the area to coordinate eye care services.

“We are working closely with the American Red Cross to determine needed supplies and services,” the insurer said in a prepared statement. “To ensure that those most in need continue to have access to eye care during this crisis, we’re continuing to work closely with our over 2,000 doctors in the San Diego and Los Angeles areas, as well as the California Optometric Association.”

Personal coordination between VSP, suppliers and the health care providers on the scene proved important, Dr. White said.

Dr. White joined the effort Oct. 22 after news reports indicated artificial tears and rewetting drops were needed at San Diego’s Qualcomm Stadium, which was being pressed into service as an evacuation center.

Dr. White, who resides a few miles from the stadium, offered his services and began contacting manufacturers via phone and e-mail for supplies.

Because of its proximity to the stadium, the head of emergency services at the facility designated Dr. White’s office as one of the distribution centers for ophthalmic supplies.

With the Red Cross responsible for a wide range of functions, eye and vision care are not always considered a priority, even when there are immediate eye-related needs.

Dr. White observed.

Ordering supplies formally through the Red Cross’ requisition system can take days.

“We had not even had time to think about this,” one Red Cross worker told Dr. White as eye care supplies arrived.

Requests to Alcon, AMO, Bausch & Lomb and TLC resulted in contact lens solution and eyewear being shipped directly to the area.

In the interim, Dr. White arranged for artificial tears, reading glasses, and rewetting drops to be made available through Qualcomm Stadium Medical Services, using a $250 purchase authorization from the SDCOS, which the local Costco drug store was willing to match.

Similarly, by personally contacting VSP, Dr. White arranged for 500 eye examinations and eyeglasses to be shipped overnight to his office.

Because the vouchers allowed for eye examinations to be performed in the offices of area optometrists, examinations were not performed at the stadium or other evacuation points, Dr. White said.

Although Dr. White’s own family would voluntarily evacuate their residence for a period during the fires, he and his son, Sam, spent four days helping to provide eye and other care at evacuation centers around the area, including San Diego’s Del Mar Race Track, which also served as a major evacuation center.

“It’s nice to think that when there is an emergency, people will come forward to help,” Dr. White said.

Our San Diego County Optometric Society has been great. I don’t know of any optometrists who are not seeing patients to provide emergency care related to the fires.”

Sports Vision Section bestows awards

The AOA Sports Vision Section honored award recipients during its Annual Business Meeting at Optometry’s Meeting™ in Boston, June 29, 2007.

Tracy Williams, O.D., was chosen for the SVS Optometrist of the Year Award in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the field of sports vision and/or the Sports Vision Section.

Nike, Inc. was unanimously chosen for the 2007 SVS Industry Appreciation Award in recognition of its continued generosity and support of sports vision, namely Nike’s dedication and commitment to advancements in vision care for athletes.

The Sports Vision Section presents this award yearly to an industry member who has demonstrated significant support of sports vision and the AOA Sports Vision Section and its efforts to promote the profession of optometry and sports vision, as well as to educate consumers on the importance of protection and caring for their eyesight and the enhancement of their visual skills.

Brian Roberts, second baseman for the Baltimore Orioles, was recognized as the recipient of SVS Eagle Award.

This award is presented each year to a non-optometrist who significantly promotes sports vision and vision training to the public. Roberts was the first baseball player to use the Nike and Bausch & Lomb’s MaxSight Sport-Tinted Contact Lenses and consistently uses them.
Fires,
from page 1

After the fires broke out, Dr. White and a staff person made their way to his practice to quickly reschedule pending appointments and “rescue” the hard drives — containing the practice’s patient records — from the office computers.

San Diego-area optometric practices are located in the central business district where they are effectively protected from mountain wildfires, Dr. White said.

“To find members that may have sustained losses in the fires, the COA systematically surveyed every optometric society in the state, Dr. Brutvan said.

“Not just those in the area of the fire but all of our (society) presidents because they might know of someone who has lost a home or office or encountered some type of problem related to the fire,” she said.

Information on optometrists who sustained losses in the fire can also be reported to the COA using a link on the home page of the association Web site.

The COA is providing a clearinghouse of information for optometrists who have suffered losses in the fires.

The association has compiled a resource list of members who are able to offer assistance such as practice opportunities or temporary housing to members in need.

The COA Web site provides a package of information with telephone numbers for major homeowner insurance plans, as well as application instructions for Federal Emergency Management Agency and California Department of Insurance assistance.

Optometry’s Charity — The AOA Foundation, the charitable arm of the AOA, offers Optometry’s Fund for Disaster Relief grants of up to $2,000 to provide for critical and urgent needs such as food, clothing and shelter when association members sustain losses in disasters.

A link to the AOA Foundation grant application Web page is provided on the COA Web site.

“This is exactly why Optometry’s Charity and Optometry’s Fund for Disaster Relief were established,” said Irving Bennett, O.D., chair of the foundation’s board of directors.

“The wildfires in Southern California prove once again that disaster can strike virtually anyone, anywhere, at any time. Just as optometrists are proving they can and will meet the eye and vision care needs of the public during emergencies, Optometry’s Fund for Disaster Relief ensures that organized optometry will be able to assist optometrists in such situations,” Dr. Bennett said.

Dr. Brutvan said the AOA and the COA are taking action to waive membership dues for the remainder of 2007 through the end of 2008 for optometrists who have sustained substantial loss of their primary residences and/or loss of practices/employment as a result of the Southern California fires.

Member optometrists seeking assistance or with information or assistance to offer can visit the COA Web site at www.coavision.org.

B&L fights burning eyes

Bausch & Lomb launched relief efforts to help those battling the Southern California wildfires over the past weeks.

“The fires were on the minds of everybody,” said Michael McDougall, director of corporate communications for Bausch & Lomb. “You couldn’t turn on the TV without seeing the fires. We also have a substantial surgical operation outside of Los Angeles, so we were thinking of our own employees as well.”

Bausch & Lomb decided to look at their products to determine if they could help the relief efforts.

Dry eye seemed to be a concern for the firefighters, so Bausch & Lomb representatives contacted the American Red Cross to make a donation of eye drops.

As a result, within 36 hours, Bausch & Lomb shipped both Soothe preservative-free eye drops and Advanced Dry Eye Environmental eye drops to Southern California.

The supply should contain enough products to provide dry eye relief for approximately 3,000 firefighters.

“The Red Cross will distribute it in the best way possible,” said McDougall. “Our goal was purely philanthropic. We have product that can help the firefighters. It’s a gesture of goodwill.”

Optometry’s Charity

The AOA Foundation
243 North Lindbergh Blvd
Saint Louis, MO 63141

November 2007

Dear Colleague:

For many years your older colleagues dreamed about having their own optometric eye care charity, much like the many charities that medical professionals support to highlight the diseases they treat. Participating in a charity not only is good philanthropy, but it also shows the public you care about health matters.

Great news! Optometry has finally established its own charity! Last year, the AOA created a new foundation for the express purpose of raising funds to carry on some of the charitable work it has done for years. The charity is designed to support people who need eye care services. It may someday soon support true optometric research. Most of all, it will provide an opportunity for others interested in the eye care field (such as employees of ophthalmic companies) as well as the general public to participate in worthy eye care causes.

Getting a foundation up and running is not an easy job, nor an inexpensive one. So I appeal to you for help. Just as most of you make annual gifts to your religious institution, to your college, to local and national charities – all good causes – I ask you to put Optometry’s Charity – the AOA Foundation (that’s our name!) on your giving list.

I need your help in doing this. I am sending this piggybacked with the AOA News to save on postage. Will you kindly help by making a tax-deductible contribution to Optometry’s Charity? Attached is a postage-free envelope. You may send a check, or your credit card information, with the envelope.

Thanks so much for getting the job done for our great profession.

Always,

Irving Bennett, O.D.

P.S. The first 100 responders with donations of $100 or more to Optometry’s Charity will receive a complimentary copy of the wonderful book of prints of original paintings by Dr. Irv Bonish. These books have been made available to our Foundation at no cost by Essilor of America.

We are most appreciative of Essilor for this gesture of support.

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**EYE ON WASHINGTON**

**Demo, from page 1**

just one more indication that the new era of health information technology is upon us,” said Col. Francis McVeigh, O.D., chair of the AOA Health Information Technology and Telemedicine Project Team.

Implementation of electronic health records by optometrists is the focus of the upcoming AOA Conference on Electronic Health Records, Jan. 25-26 (see related article, page 7).

“This demonstration is designed to show that streamlining health care management with electronic health records will reduce medical errors and improve quality of care for 3.6 million Americans,” HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt announced during an Oct. 30 press briefing at Good Samaritan Hospital in Cincinnati.

“By linking higher payment to use of EHRs to meet quality measures, we will encourage adoption of health information technology at the community level, where 60 percent of patients receive care,” he said.

“We also anticipate that EHRs will produce significant savings for Medicare over time by improving quality of care. This is another step in our ongoing effort to become a smart buyer of health care — paying for better, rather than simply paying for more,” Leavitt added.

Conducted by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the demonstration will be open to participation by up to 1,200 physician practices beginning in the spring of 2008.

The demonstration project will target 100 small and mid-sized practices in each of 12 yet-to-be-announced selected cities. Over a five-year period, the program will provide financial incentives to physician groups using certified EHRs to meet certain clinical quality measures, according to the HHS.

A bonus will be provided each year based on a physician group’s score on a standardized survey that assesses the specific EHR functions a group employs to support the delivery of care.

Under the CMS demonstration, all participating practices will be required to use a certified EHR system to perform specific functions that can positively affect patient care processes, such as clinical documentation and ordering prescriptions.

The system, which must be in place by the end of the second year, must also be approved by a certification body officially recognized by the HHS. The core incentive payment to practices will be based on performance on the quality measures, with an enhanced bonus based on how well integrated the EHR is in helping manage patient care.

The Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology (CCHIT) is currently the only certification body recognized by the secretary of HHS.


During the five-year project, the HHS estimates 3.6 million consumers will be directly affected as their primary care physicians adopt certified EHRs in their practices.

In order to amplify the effect of this demonstration project, the CMS is encouraging private insurers to offer similar incentives for EHR adoption.

The CMS demonstration also is intended to help advance the U.S. toward a system of value-driven health care, Leavitt said.

Under its Value-Driven Health Care Initiative, the HHS is attempting to establish a “system that delivers better quality at lower cost for more Americans” through the use of interoperable electronic health records, public reporting of provider quality information, public reporting of provider quality information, and incentives for value comparison, Leavitt said.

Leavitt also announced that, as part of that initiative, the HHS has begun the process of chartering value exchanges, recognized local organizations that have convened purchasers, health plans, providers, and consumers to advance value-driven health care.

Ultimately, chartered value exchanges (CVEs) will have access to Medicare physician quality performance measurement results that will be provided by the CMS, likely as soon as the summer of 2008, Leavitt said.

The CVE application process is open now through mid-December, and many local organizations, which have already been granted preliminary recognition by the HHS, are expected to apply. More information about CVEs can be found online at http://www.hhs.gov/value drivencommunities/valuexchanges/exchanges.html.
AOA to host top-level electronic health records seminar

With federal regulations changing quickly, and new technology moving even faster, it is vitally important for ODs to make informed decisions concerning electronic health records.

To give ODs practical tools and hands-on experience, the AOA is hosting “Building the Paperless Practice: AOA’s Electronic Health Records Seminar,” Jan. 25-26.

The agenda includes a briefing from the AOA’s Washington office on what ODs need to know to comply with federal standards and how health information technology may affect future reimbursement.

Other presentations will cover all aspects of implementing electronic health records (EHRs) in a practice, interoperability and security issues related to EHR products, and guidance on what to consider when investing in EHR and e-prescribing products, as shared by experienced optometrists who have already adopted health information technology.

Planned lectures include:


In addition, at least five companies with different approaches to records management will be on hand to describe their systems and offer hands-on evaluation: Compulink, EMR Logic, Eye CodeRight, First Insight, and OfficeMate.

The setting is the Gaylord Texan Resort Hotel in Grapevine, TX, near DFW International Airport.

Registration for this exclusive conference is limited, so make plans to attend now. The fee is $325 for AOA members/ $550 for non-members. Visit www.aoa.org/paperless.xml.

Firms sponsor Healthy Eyes Healthy People™ and InfantSEE® scholarship grants

C&E Vision, a national optometric buying group, has established a scholarship grant program to further the vision of the AOA Healthy Eyes Healthy People™ public health program.

The grant establishes a $1,000 scholarship for one recipient from each of the 17 accredited schools and colleges of optometry in the United States.

The $1,000 grant, established by funds donated to Optometry’s Charity by C&E Vision, is specifically designed to assist the AOA in its efforts to inform all future optometrists of the importance of this valuable program endorsed by the AOA.

To be eligible for the Healthy Eyes Healthy People™ Scholarship Grant, funded by C&E Vision, a student must:

❖ Be a third-year student member (class of 2009) in good academic standing in an accredited school or college of optometry;
❖ Be a student member of the American Optometric Student Association (AOSA) and the AOA;
❖ Submit an entry to the school’s office of the dean of student affairs (or their staff member designee) by April 1;
❖ Submit a paper not to exceed 1,000 words on the following topic:

How will you, as a primary health care provider, aid in achieving the following objective: “Reduce visual impairment due to diabetic retinopathy.” This objective is included in the 10 stated goals of the “Healthy People 2010: Vision and Eye Care Objectives for the Nation.”

Applicants should check with the dean of student affairs’ office to confirm the application deadline. The dean (or a designee) will choose the winning application, and forward it to the AOA.

A new scholarship program for third-year optometry students in each school and college of optometry has been announced by Optometry’s Charity – The AOA Foundation.

Starting in 2008, Vision West, Inc. (VWI), a national optometric buying group, has established a scholarship grant to support the AOA InfantSEE® program. The support takes the form of providing a $1,000 scholarship to be awarded to a student at each of the 17 accredited schools and colleges of optometry in the United States. VWI is committed to donating funds to help the AOA continue its efforts to inform all AOA members and all AOSA members of the importance of this project.

To be eligible for the InfantSEE® Scholarship Grant, funded by VWI, a student must:

❖ Be a third-year student member (class of 2009) in good academic standing in an accredited school or college of optometry;
❖ Be a student member of the AOSA and the AOA;
❖ Submit an entry to the school’s office of the dean of student affairs (or a staff member designee) by April 1, 2008;
❖ Submit a paper not to exceed 1,000 words on the following topic:

“How will you, as a primary health care provider, use your professional skills and patient treatment programs to further the goals of the AOA InfantSEE® Program?”

Judging the winners of the essays will be the responsibility of the individual schools.

For additional information about the scholarship grants, contact Optometry’s Charity in care of Bridget Kowalczyk, deputy director. Optometry’s Charity — The AOA Foundation 243 N. Lindbergh Blvd., Floor 1, St. Louis, MO 63141 (800) 365-2219, ext. 4237 or BTKowalczyk@aoa.org.
AOA sponsors conference promoting cohesive federal glaucoma screening policy

The AOA, partnering with other leaders in the vision community, cosponsored an Oct. 18 conference on glaucoma screening held at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. The purpose of the discussion, titled “Glaucoma Screening and Treatment: Driving Toward a Unified Federal and Private Sector Policy Approach,” was held to determine whether a U.S. Preventive Services Taskforce report could be reconciled with the existing body of scientific knowledge to develop a unified federal policy about the management of glaucoma.

AOA’s survey on Eye-Q® high on media radar

The AOA’s American Eye-Q® survey has harvested considerable results in terms of media coverage. WebMD covered the survey in an Oct. 19 article, which was then picked up by CBS News.

The second annual AOA American Eye-Q® survey shows Americans are concerned about their vision, but clearly need more accurate, expert information when it comes to their eyes and visual health.

The survey identifies Americans’ attitudes and behaviors regarding eye care and related issues and is designed to assist the AOA in educating the public about the importance of regular, comprehensive eye exams for overall health and well-being.

As part of the launch of the AOA American Eye-Q® survey findings, the AOA conducted a satellite media tour on Oct. 18 with Hilary Hawthorne, O.D., to increase awareness of what Americans need to know about taking care of their vision.

The survey was conducted by Opinion Research, and overseen by Hill & Knowlton as part of the AOA’s Optometry Awareness and Public Affairs campaign.

The results of the 2007 survey of 1,000 Americans were fairly consistent with those gathered the first year of the survey, though some new areas were included this year.

As was the case in 2006, loss of vision stands as a major concern among nearly half (47 percent) of Americans.

However, non-users (those who do not use a form of vision correction) do not visit their eye doctors as often as they should.

The WebMD stats on the Eye-Q® survey were broadcast on TV screen elevator news produced by Captivate Network, Inc. (www.captivatenetwork.com). Captivate Network programming is seen in a no-distractions viewing environment on wireless flat-panel television screens in elevators of premier office towers across North America.

Currently, the company has secured contracts with approximately 1,100 buildings from over 100 real estate companies, and is live in about 400 buildings.

The American Eye-Q® campaign to date has totaled 271 media hits and over 126 million impressions. The hits break down into the following categories:

- Online: 89
- Non-Traditional: 1
- Print: 1
- Broadcast: 171
- Radio: 9

There has also been significant interest and pick up of articles focusing on diabetes and decorative contact lenses.

Coverage has included U.S. News & World Report, BusinessWire, Fort Worth Star Telegram (TX), Daily Herald (IL), HealthDay News, Eden Prairie News (MN), the Toledo Blade (OH), WJXT-TV (FL), WHNT-TV (AL), and WMC-TV (TN).

In response to this growing problem, Rep. John Boozman, O.D. (R-AR), the only optometrist currently serving in Congress and a member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, has introduced AOA-backed legislation designed to improve the care of American military personnel affected by combat eye trauma and aid those suffering vision damage associated with TBI.

H.R. 3558—the Military Eye Trauma Act—would create a Center of Excellence within the Department of Defense specifically devoted to the prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment, and rehabilitation of eye injuries.

The AOA joined the National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (NAEVR); the Blinded Veterans Association (BVA); Prevent Blindness America (PBA) and other members of the vision community in sponsoring this important and timely briefing.

Follow the AOA-sponsored congressional briefing on combat-related eye injuries, Tom Zampieri, Ph.D., of the Blinded Veterans Association (BVA) met with members of the eye and vision care team from the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC. Pictured are Dr. Zampieri, Specialist Ruiz, Maj. Eric Weichel, M.D.; and Maj. R. Cameron Van Raekel, O.D.
HHS-OIG: ODs cannot own eye care ASCs

Optometrists can be subject to sanction under a federal anti-kickback statute if they hold ownership in ambulatory surgery centers (ASCs) that provide eye care, according to a major opinion issued last month by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Optometrists are allowed to own ambulatory surgical eye care centers under the law because they likely would provide procedures in the surgical center that are just extensions of their practices, the HHS-OIG said.

However, the OIG said that ambulatory surgical eye care centers would not represent “comparable extension of their office practices” for optometrists because an optometrist would not personally perform surgical procedures in the surgery centers. “As a result, the likelihood that they are using their investment in the surgical center simply as a vehicle for receiving remuneration for referrals of patients to the ophthalmologists increases significantly,” the OIG said in the opinion.

Laser correction centers and cataract surgery centers would fall under the category of eye care ASCs, the AOA Office of Counsel notes. An optometrist who holds an interest in an ASC could be subject to sanction even if the optometrist assists ophthalmologists with pre-operative or postoperative work at the ASCs, the HHS-OIG added.

Section 1128B of the federal Social Security Act (generally known as the federal “Anti-kickback Statute”) prohibits physicians from paying or receiving remuneration from schemes that induce patients to utilize health services reimbursable under any federally funded program. As such, referral schemes that generate surgical business violate the Anti-kickback Statute.

A proposed arrangement would have allowed nine optometrist-owners in the group practice to become investor-owners in a surgery center that was jointly owned by eight ophthalmologists and a hospital, all of whom also are owners in the group practice. The hospital would have sold some of its ownership in the surgery center over a three-year period to the optometrists and some other hospital shares would have been reallocated to the ophthalmologists.

The optometrists would agree to refer patients to the group practice facilities or the ASCs, except where patients choose otherwise, or if other facilities are more appropriate for patients’ treatment.

The HHS-OIG determined the proposed arrangement would not have sufficient safeguards to mitigate the risk that the optometrists invested in the surgical center to induce or reward referrals.

The AOA Office of Counsel noted that the HHS-OIG opinion did not address any issues directly related to the ownership of a group eye care practice by optometrists or ophthalmologists, but was limited to the issue of owning ASCs.

The HHS-OIG emphasized in footnotes to the advisory opinion that the office was expressing no opinions about the current ownership of the group practice or the surgery center. The OIG also said it expressed no opinion about the current ownership of any ancillary arrangement in which ownership interests in the group practice would be reallocated to give the individual ophthalmologists and optometrists greater ownership interest in the group practice.


References:

For more information: 800-233-5469 www.alodox.com

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- OCUSOFT® LID SCRUB™
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- ALODOX® Tablets
- OCUSOFT® LID SCRUB™

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For Adjunctive Eyelid Therapy and Hygiene
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Doxycycline is prescribed more often over minocycline because it is a more potent collagenase inhibitor.1,2 The use of subantimicrobial dose (low dose) doxycycline hyclate is beneficial in the enzyme modulation treatment of inflammatory disease.3 At these low levels (<50 mg), doxycycline reduces inflammation while maintaining maximum plasma drug concentrations below the antimicrobial threshold resulting in fewer side effects.1

Please see brief prescribing information on reverse side.
SVS performs free vision evaluation at AAU Junior Olympics

Approximately 250 athletes were evaluated and measured for visual skills by 17 volunteer optometrists and students at the Amateur Athletic Union Junior Olympic Games in Knoxville, TN, July 25-27. The evaluation program is sponsored by CIBA Vision, a Novartis Company.

Steven Hitzeman, O.D., and Stephen Beckerman, O.D., co-chaired the event. They also presented continuing education to the volunteers during the welcome reception regarding performing a sports vision evaluation. The welcome reception was also sponsored by CIBA Vision, a Novartis Company.

The following are statistics gathered from evaluating athletes at the AAU Junior Olympics since 1994:

- 30.1 percent never had an eye examination
- 31.9 percent had less than 20/20 in either eye
- 34.5 percent reported visual symptoms affecting their athletic performance
- 32 percent had reduced depth perception
- 12 percent had inaccurate eye movements

ODs interested in volunteering for next year’s evaluations in Detroit, MI, or seeking a copy of the Junior Olympics Evaluation Protocols, should call (800) 365-2219, ext. 4224 or ext. 4208 or e-mail SVS@aoa.org.

SVS Eye Emergency Kits for athletes available

The SVS is pleased to announce the SVS Eye Emergency Kits for Athletes, donated by Alcon, Inc., are available on purchase once again. These kits are a true benefit for members to connect with coaches and athletic trainers in their area by offering an Eye Emergency Kit for Athletes, which will allow them to respond appropriately until the athlete can attain a vision professional.

The kits come complete in a nylon vinyl pouch with a business card holder. Among the items included in each kit are one bottle, sterile eye wash solution; one bottle, contact lens disinfecting solution; three contact lens cases; and an informational sports-related ocular emergency triage card.

The kits are available at a discounted rate of $6 to SVS members and $10 per kit to AOA members. Prices include tax, shipping and handling.

To order, download an order form from the AOA Web site, call the SVS office at (800) 365-2219, ext. 4224 or send your request to SVS@aoa.org.
I started HMI Buying Group in 1983 to help independent optometrists get better discounts on frames and contact lenses.

We didn’t invent the idea of combining the buying power of thousands of practices. But we did execute it well enough to become the largest OD owned buying group in the country.

An even better way to lower your lab and frame bills

Now, we’re breaking the old buying group mold with our Red Tray concept. Like before, we use the purchasing power of thousands of independent practices to negotiate volume discounts with major frame suppliers and optical labs.

However, unlike traditional buying groups, we pass the full discounts on to our members — regardless of monthly volume. That saves you an additional 3% to 11% on your frame and lab purchases.

A unique ‘lab first’ concept

Red Tray is a ‘lab first’ purchasing group. That means we charge a small administration fee based on your monthly lab purchases. Bottom line: The more lab services you bill through Red Tray each month, the more you save on both lab work and frames.

For a complete explanation of what we believe to be the strongest discount plan ever offered to independent ECPs, call Linda Holley at 800.416.7676 or go to www.redtraysaves.com.

Same suppliers. Same products. Better discounts.

We’ve been doing business with all of the major frame suppliers and many of America’s best labs for 25 years. And, because our members buy millions of dollars in products from these suppliers every month, they give us some of their very best discounts. We, in turn, pass those low prices on to our members.

Jerry Hayes, OD breaks the mold for buying group discounts.

Red Tray discounts are 3% to 11% better across the board

Sample Frame Discounts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand</th>
<th>Discount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aspex</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxottica</td>
<td>20%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolution</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silhouette</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marchon</td>
<td>20%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sáfilo</td>
<td>20%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature</td>
<td>15%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tura</td>
<td>12.5%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viva Group</td>
<td>20%*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discounts are off list. *Maximum discounts vary by designer lines.

Sample Lab Discounts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lab</th>
<th>Discount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Optical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hoya</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenco</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rite-Style</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essilor</td>
<td>24%*</td>
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<tr>
<td>CareLabs Gold Level</td>
<td>10%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luzerne</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robertson</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye-Kraft</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interstate</td>
<td>10%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pech</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sutherlin</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Call to inquire about your preferred lab location. *Discounts are off National Price List.

Hesitant to make a change?

Old habits can be tough to break. But it’s just not smart business to resist change when simply billing through Red Tray can add thousands of dollars to your bottom line in the form of better discounts.

As a Red Tray member, you’ll receive the maximum published discount on every frame and lab purchase you make. Everything else works the same. You place orders directly with your suppliers and they ship directly to your office. The only difference is you pay less for lab work and frames when you purchase through Red Tray.

Call by December 31 and we’ll lock you in at 1% for 3 months.

We are confident Red Tray will lower your cost of goods and increase the profitability of the optical side of your practice, but don’t take our word for it.

Give Red Tray a try and we’ll lock you in to our lowest admin fee (1%) for three months with no minimum purchase requirement — and no further obligation.

Don’t place another order until you call.

Membership is FREE. Call 800.416.7676 or go to www.redtraysaves.com
Call for posters open

The AOA is inviting participation in the Clinical and Scientific Poster Session at the 111th Annual AOA Congress & 38th Annual AOSA Conference: Optometry’s Meeting™. The program creates a national forum for clinicians, students, and faculty to communicate interesting cases and unique research to their colleagues. The poster preview session will be held Friday, June 27, 2008 and the interactive session offering continuing education credit will be Saturday, June 28, 2008, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Washington State Trade and Convention Center. Poster abstracts must be submitted electronically and must be received by February 6, 2008. For more details and an electronic submission form, log on to www.optometristsmeeting.org and click on the Call for Posters icon. For more information contact Stacy Smith at (314) 983-4254 or at sasmith@aoa.org.

AOA offering free contract analysis

An AOA pilot program offering a Contract Analysis Service as a free member benefit is now available. A licensed attorney with expertise in contracts in the AOA Office of Counsel will review unsigned managed care plan contracts and unsigned employment contracts with commercial employers.

Managed care contracts include any insurance or similar arrangement contracted between an AOA member as a provider and any managed care or insurance entity.

Members will get a free, paragraph-by-paragraph analysis of the contract, providing information that can help make an informed decision. Send an email to ContractReview@aoa.org to request details and an analysis request form. The form can be faxed to (314) 983-7306 or filled out online at www.aoa.org/contractanalysis.xml.

The AOA Commission on Ophthalmic Standards recently met in Tampa, FL, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Academy of Optometry. The Commissioners later toured COLTS Laboratories in Clearwater, FL, an AOA-approved third-party testing facility in the AOA Seal of Acceptance Program. From left, Tim Wingert, O.D.; Greg Good, O.D., Ph.D.; Ken Brookman, O.D., Ph.D.; John Young (COLTS Laboratories); Jeff Weaver, O.D.; Bill Brown, O.D., Ph.D.; Karl Citek, O.D., Ph.D.; and Elizabeth Ortmann-Vincenzo, J.D.

Executive Director

The American Optometric Association Foundation

National foundation has an immediate opening for an Executive Director. Successful candidate directs and coordinates activities of the AOA Foundation in accordance with established policies to further achievement of goals, objectives and standards of the Foundation. Position holder plans, organizes, and directs all ongoing and special project funding programs.

A Bachelor’s degree from four-year college or university; or five to eight years related experience and/or training; or equivalent combination of education and experience in fundraising and/or endowment is required. Experience in a nonprofit setting and a Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE) is preferred. Successful candidate will possess excellent written, oral, and presentation skills; demonstrated leadership skills; and the ability to effectively manage direct reports. Position holder must also have budget expertise, strong organizational and problem solving skills. The Executive Director must have the ability to write reports, business correspondence, and procedure manuals as well as the ability to read, analyze, and interpret general business periodicals, professional journals, technical procedures, or governmental regulations. The Executive Director must be able to effectively present information and respond to questions from groups of managers, Board of Directors, volunteers, and the general public. Candidate must be able to travel to out-of-town meetings. Qualified applicants please forward your resume with salary history and requirements to:

American Optometric Association
HumanResources@theAOA.org
Human Resources
2143 N. Lindbergh Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63141
FAX: 314-983-7306

An Equal Opportunity Employer

Please do not send your resume as an attachment.
Industry Profile: VisionWeb

VisionWeb offers services to help streamline and simplify the eye care practice by automating cumbersome processes that were once manual. By using VisionWeb’s services, the eye care provider and staff will spend more time with patients and less time on the phone with suppliers and insurance companies. VisionWeb’s services include online eye care product ordering and insurance transaction processing.

The AOA plays a very important role in helping VisionWeb best serve the optical industry. Recognizing the benefits associated with using VisionWeb’s services – speed, efficiency, increased accuracy – the AOA became involved with VisionWeb to help bring these benefits to the eye care practice through VisionWeb’s AOA Royalty Program.

This program allows eye care providers to contribute nondues revenue to their AOA state affiliate. Because VisionWeb is not a buying group, eye care providers can continue to enjoy buying group benefits while contributing to their state affiliate’s ability to raise nondues revenue when they place eye care product orders online, free through VisionWeb’s online ordering service.

Under the terms of the AOA Royalty Program, VisionWeb’s online ordering service will pay participating AOA affiliates a royalty on transaction fees generated by their members’ orders placed through VisionWeb’s online ordering service.

Each state affiliate must agree to participate in the program in order to receive the royalties for orders. State affiliates interested in participating in the program, or learning more about how VisionWeb can contribute to nondues revenue, are encouraged to contact VisionWeb at (512) 241-8561 or email marketing@visionweb.com for more information.

Industry Profile is a regular feature in AOA News allowing participants of the Ophthalmic Council to express themselves on issues and products they consider important to the members of the AOA.

With its 2008 Sunwear Collection, Emilio Pucci and Marchon Eyewear have teamed to create a sunwear line that marries fashion and luxury with technical know-how and function. Shown is style EP6035.

Warburg Pincus’ acquisition of B&L complete

Bausch & Lomb and Warburg Pincus, a global private equity firm, announced that affiliates of Warburg Pincus completed the acquisition of Bausch & Lomb for a total purchase price of approximately $4.5 billion, including approximately $830 million of debt. “With a strong and supportive partner in Warburg Pincus, we are well-positioned to create new opportunities for Bausch & Lomb and advance our leadership in the eye health industry,” said Ronald L. Zarella, chairman and CEO of Bausch & Lomb. “Our customers will continue to receive high levels of service, product quality and innovation, and our commitment to serving their needs remains steadfast. On behalf of Bausch & Lomb’s management and board of directors, I want to thank our shareholders and hard-working employees for their support throughout this process.” Bausch & Lomb stock will cease to trade on the New York Stock Exchange and will be delisted. Under the terms of the agreement, Bausch & Lomb shareholders are entitled to receive $65 in cash for each share of Bausch & Lomb common stock they hold. “We’re delighted to be partners with Bausch & Lomb, a global leader in vision care, ophthalmic devices and pharmaceuticals,” said Elizabeth H. Weatherman, a Warburg Pincus managing director. “We look forward to helping the company build upon its rich heritage and premier brand,” said Weatherman.

Marchon Eyewear introduces new additions to its feminine Tres Jolie eyewear collection. Shown is style Tres Jolie 111 with a graceful almond-shaped frame crafted in lustrous metal to complement feminine features. Spring hinges create the ideal fit. This style also works well for progressive lenses.
Transitions introduces customizable tools for eyeglass guide

Transitions Optical, Inc. announced the introduction of new customizable tools based on its consumer eyeglass guide education program through the Transitions Online Marketing (TOM) tool to help eye care professionals educate patients about eyewear options.

Including both in-office and multiple direct mail pieces, the materials can be customized free of charge with individual practice logos and information, allowing eye care professionals to create their own marketing campaigns while providing patients with the information to make the best eyewear choices.

Available online at www.TransitionsTOM.com, a new, customizable postcard, patient newsletter and flyer can be used to remind patients that choosing lens options is just as important as frame selection.

All materials urge patients to seek additional advice from their eye care professionals during their next appointment.

In addition, all three materials will soon be available in Spanish. The postcard encourages patients to schedule their next eye appointment today and to visit the Eyeglass Guide online (www.EyeglassGuide.com) to learn more about vision-optimizing lens options and take a short quiz to find out which lenses will work best for them.

The Eyeglass Guide flyer is ideal for distribution to patients or displaying in office because it includes the same content as the print version of the Eyeglass Guide, but can be customized with individual practice logos and information.

Similar to the Eyeglass Guide, the handout details the benefits of various lens options – from different material choices and lens types – to vision-optimizing enhancements, such as anti-reflective coatings and photochromics.

The guide and flyer also include tips for choosing a frame and the value of purchasing multiple pairs.

Eye care professionals can also log on to the TOM tool to customize a new, Eyeglass Guide edition of the Sight Line patient newsletter to send to patients as a way to keep vision top-of-mind between appointments.

The Eyeglass Guide Web site has shown considerable success, demonstrating that consumers do have an interest in their eyewear options.

- More than 420 new visitors are logging on to the site each day, and more than one-third are returning to the site for more information.
- 63 percent of visitors bookmark the site.
- On average, visitors spend five to six minutes on the site.
- 30 percent of visitors to the site spend five to 15 minutes on the site.

“With more than 400 consumers visiting the Eyeglass Guide online each day, Transitions Optical’s eyeglass guide education program has been extremely successful in preparing consumers to discuss their options in eyewear,” said Dawn West, trade marketing manager, Transitions. “But in order for this program to be most successful, it will be critical for the eye care professionals themselves to prompt their patients to do a little homework prior to – or during – their visit. We are very excited to offer these new customizable tools to help them further engage their patients and share the importance of lens selection.”

Vistakon releases new ocular anti-infective, gets FDA approval for Acuvue Oasys CL as bandage lens

Vistakon announced the introduction of its new ocular anti-infective medication and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) approval of Acuvue® Oasys Brand Contact Lenses with Hydraclear™ Plus as a bandage lens at the American Academy of Optometry last month.

Vistakon® Pharmaceuticals, LLC, introduced Iquix® (levofloxacin ophthalmic solution) 1.5% ocular anti-infective medication – the only newer-generation fluoroquinolone approved by the FDA for the treatment of corneal ulcers.

Iquix rapidly penetrates corneal tissue and provides broad coverage of the most sight-threatening gram-negative pathogens and the most prevalent gram-positive pathogens, including: Cornyebacterium species, Staphylococcus aureus, Staphylococcus epidermis, Streptococcus pneumoniae, Viridans group streptococci, Pseudomonas aeruginosa, and Serratia marcescens.

For more information on warnings and precautions, visit www.Iquix.com or call (800) 523-6225, options 2 & 3.

Vistakon®, Division of Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc., also announced that the FDA granted an additional indication for Acuvue Oasys Brand Contact Lenses with Hydraclear Plus, approving the lens for therapeutic use as a bandage lens for certain acute and chronic ocular conditions.

Acuvue Oasys for therapeutic use can also provide vision correction during healing if required.

“Many therapeutic soft lens applications require regular use and overnight wear for several days, or sometimes longer,” said Sheila Hickson-Curran, director, Medical Affairs, Vistakon.

“The swaddling, smoothness, flexibility, high oxygen transmissibility, comfort, and Class I UV blocking properties of Acuvue Oasys make it an excellent choice for therapeutic use as a bandage lens for a range of conditions.”

FDA approval of Acuvue Oasys for therapeutic use as a bandage lens includes the following acute and chronic ocular conditions:

- For corneal protection in lid and corneal abnormalities such as entropion, trichiasis, tarsal scars and recurrent corneal erosion. In addition, it is indicated for protection where sutures or ocular structure malformation, degeneration or paralysis may result in the need to protect the cornea from exposure or repeated irritation.
- For corneal pain relief in conditions such as bullous keratopathy, epithelial erosion and abrasion, filamentary keratitis, post-kerato-plasty.
- For use as a barrier during the healing process of epithelial defects such as chronic epithelial defects, corneal ulcer, neurotrophic and neuroparalytic keratits, and chemical burns.
- For post-surgical conditions where bandage lens use is indicated, such as post refractive surgery, lamellar grafts, corneal flaps, and additional ocular surgical conditions.
- For structural stability and protection in piggyback lens fitting where the cornea and associated surfaces are too irregular to allow for corneal rigid gas permeable lenses to be fit. In addition, the use of the lens can prevent irritation and abrasions in conditions where there are elevation differences in the host/graph junction or scar tissue.

For more information, call (800) 843-2020 or visit www.pec.acuvue.com.
MEETINGS

November
OPTOMETRIC EXTENSION PROGRAM
VT/STRAUBILUS & AMELIORA (OEP CLINICAL CURRICULUM)
Nov. 29-Dec. 2, 2007
Grand Rapids, Michigan
Theresa Kejci, 800/447 0370
www.tobadoc.org

MAINE OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION DECEMBER "ANNUAL" CONFERENCE
Nov. 30-Dec. 2, 2007
Hilton Garden Inn, Freeport Hotel,
Freeport, ME, Joann Gagne
410/727-7800; 410/727-1801
moa.office@maineeyedoctors.com
www.maineeyedoctors.com

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY GLAUCOMA CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
Nov. 30-Dec. 2, 2007
Freeport, ME, Joann Gagne
207/626-9920
Freeport, ME, Joann Gagne
moa.office@maineeyedoctors.com
www.aoa.org/paperless
www.ultimateeventsllc.com

December
MARYLAND OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION ANNUAL FALL MEETINGS
Nov. 1-2, 2007
Baltimore Hyatt Regency, Baltimore,
Sue A. Weingartner
806/443-1160
Sue A. Weingartner
moa.office@maineeyedoctors.com
www.aoa.org/paperless

NEW ENGLAND PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES NATIONAL CORNER AND ANTI-SEGMENT SOCIETY REGIONAL MEETING
Dec. 2, 2007
Holiday Inn, Marlborough,
Judy Hughes, O.D.
804/356-1565
Judy Hughes, O.D.
www.marylandeyes.com

MARYLAND COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY IBRAN VISION AND LEARNING CONFERENCE
December 5, 2007
314/516-5655
www.marylandeyes.com

January
The ART & SCIENCE of OPTOMETRIC CARE—A BEHAVIORAL PERSPECTIVE (OEP Clinical Curriculum)
Optometric Extension Program Foundation
January 9-12, 2008
Phoenix, AZ
Theresa Kejci
800/447 0370
www.aoa.org/paperless

SOUTHWEST CONGRESS OF OPTOMETRY
OPTOMETRIC EXTENSION PROGRAM FOUNDATION
Jan. 23-26, 2008
San Juan, Puerto Rico
Theresa Kejci
800/447 0370
www.aoa.org/paperless

April
NORTHWEST CONGRESS OF OPTOMETRY
OPTOMETRIC EXTENSION PROGRAM FOUNADATION
March 9-10, 2008
Baltimore, MD
Theresa Kejci
800/447 0370
www.aoa.org/paperless

To submit an item for the meetings calendar, send a note to evencalendar@aoa.org
The American Optometric Association Order Department
Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 8AM-4PM
(Central Standard Time)

Fax: (314) 991-4101
E-mail: Orders@aoa.org
On the Web: www.aoa.org under doctors/order department
Toll-free: (800) 262-2210
automated telephone available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Code Books
A list of codes to aid in submitting Medicare and third party insurance claims.

Pamphlets
We offer a large selection of pamphlets to aid patients in understanding their eye care needs.

Letterhead
Choose from five different styles to be imprinted with your personal information.

HIPAA Forms
Notice of Privacy Practices and Patient Authorization forms available in English and Spanish.

Answer to Your Questions Series
These easy to read pamphlets help answer patients eye care questions.

Wise Eyes Material
Provides a fun way to teach children about the magic of sight. Designed especially for kindergarten through third grade.

Charts and Models
Great for office displays and one-to-one patient education.

Fact Sheets
Easy to understand text and interesting facts with well drawn illustrations.

Educational Material
NEW interactive CD with teachers guide included. Also, several pamphlets written for children’s specific vision care.

Signs and Plaques
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Additional residency positions are available at our affiliated programs: Ocular Disease at Eye Health Partners of Middle Tennessee; Ocular Disease at Omni Eye Services of Atlanta; Hospital-Based / Primary Care Optometry at the Tuscaloosa, AL VAMC; and Geriatric and Low Vision Rehabilitative Optometry at the Birmingham VAMC.

Deadline for ORMS application (www.optometryresident.org) is February 1, 2008. Requests for additional information should be addressed to:

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School of Optometry
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For further information or questions regarding the application procedures, please contact:

Lori Vollmer, O.D., F.A.A.O.
Director of Residency Programs
Nova Southeastern University
HPD Optometry
3200 S. University Drive
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33328
lvollmer@nova.edu
954-262-1452
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To list an event on the AOA Calendar, send information to EventCalendar@aoa.org or visit www.aoanews.org and click on Event Calendar

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Casey Eye Institute-Optometrist

Schedule:
Days, Full Time

The Casey Eye Institute at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) in Portland, Oregon is seeking an Optometrist with exceptional clinical skills in the areas of Low Vision Rehabilitation and comprehensive eye & vision care to join the practice.

The Casey Eye Institute houses the department of Ophthalmology within Oregon Health & Science University. The Institute has over 50 physicians and optometrists who cover all subspecialty areas of ophthalmology and optometry and is nationally recognized for the excellence of its staff. Casey is home to 300 total employees, and is part of OHSU, which has nearly 12,000 employees working to fulfill its mission of teaching, healing, discovery and outreach.

Candidates must have earned a Doctor of Optometry degree from an accredited college or school of optometry and possess or be eligible to obtain current Oregon licensure. Completion of a residency in low vision rehabilitation or equivalent clinical experience is expected. Required clinical skills include comprehensive low vision rehabilitation, refractometry, keratometry, retinoscopy, tonometry, pachymetry and the ability to perform and analyze corneal topography; and possess comprehensive eye & vision care including contact lens fitting and dispensing. Other desired skills include clinic management, teaching of ophthalmology residents, patient counseling, and public speaking.

Salary commensurate with experience. OHSU offers excellent benefits with an employer paid retirement plan. OHSU is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution.

Please send CV and letter of interest to:
Contact: Alix Bach, MPA
Human Resources Manager
Email: bacha@ohsu.edu
Mail: 3181 S.W. Sam Jackson Park Road, Mail Code CEI-HR
Portland, OR 97239-3098
Phone: (503) 494-2640
Fax: (503) 494-0470

Executive Director

The Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry is seeking an experienced executive director to manage their activities and finances. The Executive Director recommends new policies, provides program guidance, and implements policy adopted by the Board of Directors and/or the House of Delegates. The Executive Director coordinates eight staff and over 50 volunteers in the development and implementation of ARBO programs and activities. For additional information visit arbo.org.

Computer and technology skills are essential. Experience in management and motivation of people, expertise in organizational methods, oral/written communication, and multi-tasking ability are highly desirable. Experience in the ophthalmic community would be preferred. Excellent benefit package. Salary dependent on experience and qualifications.

While ARBO offices are currently located in St. Louis, relocation to another metropolitan area would be considered.

Please forward resume and salary history or inquiries to: executardir@arbo.org.

Deadline for applications is December 2, 2007.
The Ohio State University College of Optometry
Affiliated Residency Programs
2008 - 2009

The Ohio State University College of Optometry invites applications for its affiliated one-year residency programs in Primary Eye Care and Ocular Disease. All programs begin July 1, 2008, and a competitive stipend is offered to attract highly-qualified residency candidates. Applicants should be highly inquisitive and self-motivated to work with challenging patients and state-of-the-art equipment under the direct supervision of outstanding optometric educators. For information on any of OSU’s seven accredited programs, please visit our website (www.optometry.osu.edu) or contact the appropriate program’s supervisor:

Chillicothe/Columbus VA … Dr. Brian Montgomery (brian.montgomery@va.gov) or Dr. Andrew Weibel (Andrew.T.Weibel@va.gov)

Cleveland VA……………… Dr. Stacia Yangios (stacia.yangios@med.va.gov)

Dayton VA………………… Dr. Gregory Krakofoe (gregory.krakofoe@med.va.gov)

Hampton VA ……………… Dr. Gay Tokumaru (gay.tokumaru@med.va.gov)

Cincinnati Eye Institute…. Dr. Kevin Corcoran (kcorcoran@cincinnatiye.com)

Eye Center of Toledo……… Dr. David Bejet (dbbejet@yahoo.com)

Ohio Eye Alliance ………… Dr. Scott Young (syoung22@neo.rr.com)

To build a diverse workforce Ohio State encourages applications from individuals with disabilities, minorities, veterans, and women. EEO/AA employer.

Southern College of Optometry has faculty positions available for clinicians in various disciplines. While our needs are primarily for clinicians in primary care, those with talents in other areas are also encouraged to apply. The successful candidate will have excellent clinical skills, leadership abilities and a high degree of intellectual curiosity. Additional skills such as classroom education and clinical research are also desirable.

The position requires a Doctor of Optometry degree with full scope licensure in Tennessee (or eligibility for such licensure.) An advanced degree and/or residency training are highly desirable.

Salary is commensurate with level of education, training and experience.

For information, please address inquiries to:

Charles L. Haine, O.D., M.S.
Vice President for Academic Affairs
Southern College of Optometry
1245 Madison Avenue
Memphis, Tennessee 38104-2222
(901) 722-3234
email: chaine@sco.edu

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State University of New York
State College of Optometry

DEAN AND VICE PRESIDENT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

The State University of New York State College of Optometry invites nominations and applications for the position of Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs. This position is responsible for the overall administration, coordination, and development of instructional policies, programs, personnel, and facilities. The position also oversees curriculum implementation, research activities, faculty development objectives and strategies, course and program assessment, budget and planning.

The successful candidate must be an effective leader, working well with faculty, staff, and students, and must be an excellent communicator capable of integrating exciting and innovative changes into the curriculum. Candidates should have substantial experience in teaching, research, scholarship, and administration. A Doctor of Optometry degree is expected. The Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs will report to the President of the College.

The Search Committee will start reviewing application material immediately with the expectation that the formal interview process will begin by December 1st, 2007. Applicants should submit a letter of interest, CV, and the names and complete contact information for three references. Confidential inquiries, nominations, and application materials should be directed to:

Ms. Elaine Wells, MA, MLS, AIPH
Chair, Search Committee
SUNY College of Optometry
33 West 42nd Street
New York, NY 10036
ewellz@sunyopt.edu
www.sunyopt.edu

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• Low Vision Rehabilitation/Primary Eye Care-VA (3)
• Primary Eye Care/Geriatric Optometry-VA (2)
• Ocular Disease-VA (3)

For more information about our programs, please contact:

Douglas J. Hoffman, O.D., F.A.A.O.
Director of Residencies
The New England Eye Institute
940 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 2
Boston, MA 02215
hoffman@neeco.edu

or visit the NECO Website at www.neeco.edu

For application information, please visit the ORMS Website at: www.orms.org
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